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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Ms. DIOP (Vice-Chairman)	(Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. PRONK (Netherlands) said that new developments, such as the weakening of nation States as the result of the increase in uncontrolled world capital movements in the monetary sphere alone, unrelated to productive investment, and newly emerging domestic conflicts with major social and economic consequences, had made it all the more urgent to broaden the global development agenda once again. Economic and political liberalization did not always go hand in hand and the social emancipation of ethnic groups by powerful central authorities had unleashed forces which were basically egocentric. The 1990s could best be described as a decade of transition. Transition would take time, would require a new approach to development, more resources and also a reform of institutions. It must be recognized that conflicts within societies were not only normal but inherent to development itself and that no durable peace could be achieved without striking a balance between social and economic objectives, on the one hand, and political and security objectives, on the other.

2. Nations which had opted for both political democracy and a market economy were now debating the virtues of adopting a top-down approach to economic development which generated rapid economic growth and relegated issues on equity and democracy to the background as opposed to the bottom-up approach which allowed people to participate on an equal footing in development from the very beginning. The United Nations could foster the dialogue about the real meaning of human development in a rapidly changing global society of nations and peoples and could also support transition. However, transitions required resources, as did relief, resettlement of refugees and reconstruction of infrastructure, all of which were prerequisites for economic development.

3. It had been agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that substantial new and additional funding would be provided in order to ensure a prompt and effective implementation of Agenda 21. In his delegation's view, industrialized countries should agree upon a substantial replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) which was the best means of helping the poorest countries to break out of abject poverty and human misery and move towards economic reform and development. Secondly, a substantial earth increment should be added to IDA to demonstrate a willingness to put into practice what had been agreed upon in Rio. His delegation had been disappointed by the reticence shown at the recent annual meeting of the World Bank and surprised by the tendency to consider contributions to an earth increment as voluntary. The idea of an earth increment did not need to be limited to IDA. If it was agreed to establish earth increments to the regional development banks and funds and even to the European Development Fund of the European Community, national environmental action and priorities of developing countries based on Agenda 21 would receive the necessary multilateral financial attention they really deserved. A

(Mr. Pronk, Netherlands)

consensus had also been reached that, if adequately restructured, the Global Environment Facility was the most appropriate mechanism to meet the incremental costs of dealing with environmental problems of a global character. And, in that respect, the aim should be to increase the resources of the Facility up to a level about the same size as IDA, since only a fund of that size could seriously tackle the enormous problems in that field.

4. Far-reaching measures should be taken to help the least developed countries overcome their debt problems. Although the Paris Club had agreed, in December 1991, on a new package to reduce the debt of the least developed countries, the recent decision to include a commercial and therefore non-concessional option in the Trinidad Terms would, in fact, diminish the prospects of reducing the debt of the poorest and least developed countries.

5. The outcome of the Rio Conference was sufficiently substantive to make his Government maintain its offer to provide new and additional financial resources up to a maximum of 0.1 per cent of net national income in addition to its current commitment for development assistance. That offer was, however, conditional upon the number and nature of commitments by other countries to raise additional resources. Noting that the European Community had offered to make an initial contribution of 3 billion ECU, he expressed the hope that much of it would be through the provision of new and additional resources.

6. There was a need to review the availability of new and additional resources for sustainable development in terms not only of their quantity and quality but also of their composition. A new approach to development might also require a fresh definition of development assistance and could be broadened to include financing for United Nations peace and security programmes in developing countries. Donors and beneficiaries alike should be allowed to participate in the review and monitoring of international assistance and that was one crucial reason why a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development was needed. The Commission should become the core institution to monitor and review the implementation of Agenda 21 and the availability of the necessary resources for its implementation.

7. Mr. MAHMOUD (Lebanon) said that real solutions must be found to the scourges of underdevelopment, poverty and ignorance. for international peace and stability were at stake. Political will was vital to the success of that undertaking. All nations should do their utmost to prevent confrontation between North and South, as experience had demonstrated that confrontation was not the way to solve the problems of mankind.

8. Concerted efforts were required to help the least developed countries overcome their economic structural deficiencies and attain sustainable growth. In that connection, the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development represented an important investment in the future of mankind. The proposed Commission on Sustainable Development would be a vital instrument for monitoring the implementation of various programmes in developed and developing countries.

(Mr. Mahmoud, Lebanon)

9. The need to enhance regional cooperation was becoming increasingly evident; such cooperation, particularly in the areas of education, energy, natural resources and communication, could do much to promote sustainable growth in many countries. The regional economic and social commissions could play a constructive role in promoting such cooperation.

10. The restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields was an important item on the Committee's agenda. Improving the effectiveness of United Nations operational activities was an urgent task if the challenges that lay ahead were to be met.

11. Miss Diop (Senegal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

12. Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka) said that the Committee should urgently focus attention on two fundamental tasks: eradicating poverty and ensuring the future of the planet. In tackling those tasks, the international community must strive to achieve a proper balance between development and environment. International cooperation and far-sighted domestic policies were vital to maintain such a balance.

13. Development was the first priority. A consensus seemed to be emerging on a new style of development, sustainable development. However, developing countries did not have the necessary financial resources and technology to achieve that goal. It was in the interests of the world community to help them in that task. In that connection, the proposal to convene an international conference on development financing was both timely and appropriate.

14. The world was becoming increasingly interdependent following the end of the cold war; new power rivalries should not be allowed to jeopardize that trend. The challenges facing the developing countries were likely to become even more formidable as a result of the radical changes that had taken place in the world's economic structure. The developing countries were concerned that attention would be diverted away from urgent development problems, that resources would be redirected elsewhere and that commodity markets would remain depressed.

15. If the economic gap between the North and the South were allowed to persist it would jeopardize world peace and stability and endanger the new consensus required for global sustainable development. Accordingly, he called for the elimination of protectionism, managed trade and unilateralism.

16. An improvement in the North-South dialogue was fundamental to achieving economic growth in the South and in the rest of the world; the key to such improvement was a firm commitment by the international community to the right to development and to the principles of equity and justice. Those principles should be applied without any double standards. In that connection he expressed the hope that a genuine effort would be made to bring the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations to a successful conclusion and noted

(Mr. Kalpage, Sri Lanka)

that UNCTAD must be strengthened so that it could play a greater role in international trade.

17. Although increased aid was important, developing countries could not continue to rely on that alone; in the long run aid must be replaced by trade and self-reliance. In the context of self-reliance, South-South cooperation was extremely important.

18. With respect to regional cooperation in South Asia, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had undertaken many important initiatives to accelerate growth in its member countries. Such initiatives included the decision to establish an independent South Asian commission on poverty alleviation and a South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) to promote trade and commerce among SAARC countries; a study on the impact of global climate change on the environment in the region had also been initiated.

19. The effectiveness of the various United Nations decisions and resolutions aimed at achieving economic development depended on genuine commitment on the part of Member States to the realization of that goal, a change in the flow of resources between developed and developing countries and a more effective United Nations based on the principles of universality, sovereign equality of Member States and democracy and transparency.

20. Mr. TINT SWE (Myanmar) said that there could be no lasting peace as long as the majority of the world's population lived in a state of underdevelopment and abject poverty. It was high time the international community started to make concerted efforts to bring about economic revitalization and growth, particularly in the developing countries. The emerging global economic order should provide more equitable economic opportunities for all countries. Only a strong, open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system could foster growth in international trade and contribute to global prosperity. Consequently, the early and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations was of utmost importance. Another significant component of world economic recovery was effective macroeconomic coordination, particularly by the developed countries whose policies had a direct bearing on the current state of the world economy.

21. The economic situation of the least developed countries continued to deteriorate. Most of them had had negative growth rates for over a decade and many were undertaking major economic reforms, often at high social cost. The international community must do its part by meeting its commitment to implement fully the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s.

22. It was important to consolidate and build on the achievements of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The international community was being provided with a broad framework for a new global partnership in the common quest for sustainable development, and the provision

(Mr. Tint Swe, Myanmar)

of adequate, new and additional resources to the developing countries to enable them to implement Agenda 21 was essential for the attainment of that goal. In addition, environmentally sound technologies must be transferred to the developing countries on preferential and concessional terms.

23. The Commission on Sustainable Development was the primary intergovernmental mechanism recommended by the Conference for the implementation of its decisions. His delegation would participate actively in the Second Committee's efforts to determine the specific procedures and organizational modalities of the Commission.

24. The Conference had reaffirmed the sovereign right of countries to use their own natural resources in keeping with their development objectives and priorities. Developed countries and international institutions should not use environmental considerations or conditionalities as an excuse for interfering in the internal affairs of developing countries, nor should environmental considerations be used to introduce any form of conditionality in aid or development financing, or to impose trade barriers affecting the export and development efforts of developing countries.

25. Mr. KRYZHANIVSKIY (Ukraine) said that Ukraine, which had recently celebrated the first anniversary of the recovery of its independence, was firmly committed to the market-oriented model of economic development and was resolved to speed up the process of privatization and to increase the independence of economic agents by strengthening the influence of administrative structures on the State sector of the economy through the use of economic levers. Support for entrepreneurship, liberalization of foreign economic activity, the creation of favourable conditions for foreign investment and withdrawal from the "single rouble area" were among the priorities of its economic policy.

26. In carrying out those radical economic reforms and accelerating its integration into the world economy, Ukraine was relying primarily on its own strengths and the talent and industriousness of its people. At the same time, it wished to cooperate with such institutions as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Ukraine was not seeking hand-outs or humanitarian aid but had come to those organizations with plans for cooperation in promising economic programmes.

27. United Nations programmes and projects in the social and economic fields should yield more practical results for Ukraine, as well as for all other countries. The comprehensive processes of the transition to a market economy should receive an adequate response from the United Nations and be reflected in its practical work.

28. His delegation was pleased that new approaches to the role of the Organization in the strengthening of international cooperation for development

(Mr. Kryzhanivskiy, Ukraine)

had been put forward during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, which had made significant improvements in its methods of work. His delegation hoped that the Committee would consider and develop those new approaches.

29. Efforts to restructure of the social and economic sector of the United Nations and institute administrative and financial reforms must take account of the interests of all countries, particularly countries that received international aid. Such reforms should contribute to the harmonization of the economic interests of all members of the international community.

30. Ukraine could not agree with the methodology used to assess the contributions of the States that had emerged from the former Soviet Union. The latest recommendations of the Committee on Contributions would have the effect of increasing Ukraine's contribution by more than 50 per cent. Those recommendations had been made contrary to existing criteria and violated the consensus that had been reached at the previous session of the General Assembly.

31. The solution of social and economic problems depended on the availability of additional resources. The recent trend on the part of some countries to reduce their military expenditure provided a real opportunity for obtaining such resources. It was essential that that trend should become universal and that the new resources should be used to finance programmes of the United Nations system.

32. One of the major priorities of the United Nations should be the promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development. The basic documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development served as a good starting-point for future work. In order to preserve the "spirit of Rio", it was necessary to establish an organizational mechanism to implement the decisions of the Conference and, in particular, the provisions of Agenda 21.

33. The structure of the United Nations bodies dealing with environmental protection should be improved. The establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development was a step in the right direction. The Commission should become the principal coordinating centre for all environmental protection activities undertaken by the United Nations system. A comprehensive study should be made of the possibility of convening the Security Council at least once a year to consider environmental problems that posed a potential threat to peace and security. His delegation supported the idea of establishing an institution to determine international responsibility for damage to the environment, in particular an international environmental court. It was also in favour of creating an international force - the "United Nations Green Helmets" - which could respond quickly to environmental emergencies and disputes.

(Mr. Kryzhanivskiy, Ukraine)

34. Ukraine attached particular importance to the increased involvement of the United Nations in mobilizing international cooperation to mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. It was necessary to take specific practical steps to alleviate the effects of the disaster, and his delegation hoped that the Secretariat would consider new approaches in that area. Ukraine was experiencing economic difficulties and was counting on the financial and material assistance of the international community. Preparations should be made for the convening of an international forum for representatives of international business circles and social organizations with a view to mobilizing resources for the implementation of the Joint Plan of International Cooperation to Mitigate the Consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster.

35. Mr. Piriz-Ballon (Uruguay) resumed the Chair.

36. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that the international community should endeavour to ensure the effective and consistent implementation of the conclusions, recommendations and decisions of the Cartagena Commitment. In that respect, his delegation welcomed the establishment by the Trade and Development Board of four standing committees and five ad hoc working groups in accordance with the recommendations of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

37. More than any other developing region, Africa was more dependent on the production and marketing of commodities. The solution of the commodities problem therefore continued to be essential to the success of Africa's efforts to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. The Standing Committee on Commodities should endeavour to find fair and lasting solutions to the problem of plummeting commodity prices, outmoded commodities agreements and the lack of real progress in the preparation of new agreements that could guarantee fair and remunerative prices. If the commodities sector was to contribute to the achievement of global development objectives, which included the satisfaction of the basic needs of populations and the improvement of their standard of living and serve as a springboard for industrialization, it was necessary to establish a solid price base for commodities.

38. In the area of food and agricultural development, the main priority was to achieve, in the short term, food security, since food aid provided in response to emergency situations and natural disasters did not promote a long-term solution to hunger, malnutrition and food self-sufficiency. In the area of new and renewable sources of energy and the development of the energy resources for the developing countries, the measures to be taken should be in keeping with the recommendations and decisions adopted at the Rio Conference.

39. One of the first measures to be taken in the follow-up of the Rio Conference would be the formal establishment of the high-level Commission on Sustainable Development, whose methods of operation would be determined at the current session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Mongbe, Benin)

40. Benin had been one of the 155 States that had signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which it intended to ratify early in 1993. Since the 50 ratifications required for the Convention to enter into force were unlikely to be obtained before the end of 1992, he suggested that the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee be postponed until sometime in 1993.

41. The elimination of poverty in the developing countries was a major objective. His delegation therefore fully supported the chapter of Agenda 21 that dealt with the complex and multidimensional problem of poverty. It was clear that any action on the part of the international community to resolve that problem should be based on country-specific programmes and the provision of international assistance for national action. His delegation hoped that, in view of the end of the cold war and the relaxation of international tension, sufficient resources could be allocated to the common task of eliminating poverty and the scourges of hunger, malnutrition and illness that accompanied it.

42. It was vital to strengthen international cooperation in the search for a lasting solution to the external debt problems of the developing countries. With regard to Africa, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s should be implemented by the international community and an international conference on African external debt should be organized. Operational activities for development should take into account the recommendations of Agenda 21 for a full integration of socio-economic and environmental issues in economic planning. The United Nations should play a leading role in the elimination of poverty, hunger and illiteracy, the improvement of health, the achievement of a more equitable distribution of income, the optimization of human resources and the establishment of a new partnership between the developed and the developing countries. An international conference on money and finance for development would provide an ideal framework within which to discuss the necessary finance for those objectives. The creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was proof of the importance attached by the United Nations to disaster relief activities. In accordance with the objectives of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, stress should be laid on disaster prevention and mitigation, since special economic assistance was not always sufficient to cover the needs generated by disasters, and such programmes did not always have the desired impact.

43. Mr. PERKINS (United States of America) said that in an era of economic integration, international currency volatility and privatization of State industries, economic and finance issues were gaining in prominence in the work of the United Nations. Economic security, opportunity and competitiveness would become a primary mission of the United States. Prosperity, along with peacemaking and non-proliferation was essential for world peace, and depended on a growth-oriented international economic order which safeguarded the environment and in which the private sector was the engine for the expansion

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

of developing and emerging economies. His delegation intended to sponsor a specific initiative on privatization in order to help developing and emerging countries achieve economic transition based on sound national policies, and to increase opportunities for trade and investment and draw much-needed foreign direct investment. Poverty alleviation also required qualitative improvements in health, education and nutrition. The United States had long been the single greatest donor of development aid and was about to approve a $12.3 billion increase in its commitment to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). His country was considering a reform of its foreign assistance institutions, laying greater stress on assistance for environmental purposes, and strongly supported United Nations efforts on the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. The United States long-standing support for emergency humanitarian relief would continue, and he called on Member States to designate stockpiles of resources to meet humanitarian emergencies. The United States would explore new ways to ensure adequate American financial support for humanitarian operations.

44. His delegation wished to ensure effective follow-up to the Rio Conference and strongly supported the establishment of a Commission on Sustainable Development as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 and the integration of economics and environment. Such a commission should provide a forum for both Governments and relevant intergovernmental organizations and financial institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations. His Government hoped to ratify the Framework Convention on Climate Change and welcomed the convening of the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at Geneva in December. That Committee was the appropriate forum in which to undertake preparations for the entry into force of the Convention. His country would continue to make voluntary contributions to the special fund established under General Assembly resolution 45/212 and urged other Governments and organizations to do the same.

45. His delegation applauded the Secretary-General's ongoing managerial reform of the United Nations and urged Member States to work towards true reform throughout the system. Reform was needed in the United Nations Secretariat, in the Economic and Social Council, and in the United Nations operational activities at the field level. His delegation would press for cost-effectiveness and greater self-reliance, including further decentralization of the United Nations development system to the country level, and would follow up on its recent proposal for reform of the United Nations development system field representation. His delegation would call on the Committee to consider the future role and mandate of the World Food Council (WFC); it was disappointed that WFC had been unable to carry out its role and mandate as originally foreseen. His Government supported action by the Committee to reassign the WFC policy coordination function to the Economic and Social Council and its inter-agency coordination function to the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

46. Mr. NANDOE (Suriname) after endorsing the statement delivered by the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77, said that economic and social issues should be given as much attention as those involving peace and security. The world economy remained fragile: in the industrialized world, growth remained sluggish and unemployment high, and in most developing countries the situation was no better. While development was primarily the responsibility of the developing countries, the policies they adopted could only succeed within a favourable global environment. Structural adjustment reforms entailed considerable social costs; unless those countries received external support to mitigate such costs, their fragile democracies could be at risk. In the past too much attention had been focused on growth and not enough on fundamental issues such as the eradication of poverty and equitable distribution of the fruits of development.

47. The emergence of new centres of economic power in the industrialized countries and subregional economic groupings in the developing countries had given rise to economic multipolarism, which would contribute to trade liberalization and impart new dynamism to the multilateral trade system. However, the position of the developing countries could be weakened, since they lacked the technical and financial resources to compete effectively in the world market. Furthermore, they were compelled to transfer a substantial part of their financial resources to their donors and also risked being "crowded out" of international capital markets by the newly industrialized economies and the central and eastern European countries. The expected rise in interest rates meant that the prospects for developing countries dependent on official development assistance were not very bright. He wondered whether there would be sufficient political will to mobilize sufficient resources for some of the United Nations programmes, such as Agenda 21. The Chairman of the Group of 77 had urged the economic powers to resolve their differences, especially on agricultural trade, and to conclude the Uruguay Round. It was vital for the developing countries that protectionist measures be dismantled. He appealed for an open and transparent multilateral trading system.

48. Mr. FERNANDEZ DE COSSIO (Cuba) said that the promises made to the third world countries at the end of the cold war era had proved to be hollow; developing countries had had little or no say in decisions taken at the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, by the international financial institutions, or at meetings of the seven most highly industrialized countries. Financial and technological resources continued to flow chiefly between the countries of the North, added to which political opportunism ensured that aid went first to the so-called "economies in transition", rather than to the neediest. The third world countries were in fact now more marginalized than they had been two years previously; and it was clear that the new world order was an elitist order, from which the poor were to be excluded. The structural crisis of underdevelopment had been compounded by the recession in the industrialized countries. Although the existence of imbalances in those same countries was a major cause of that recession, there was no way of compelling those powerful economies to make the necessary adjustments. The result was increased poverty and hunger for the vast majority of the peoples of the Earth.

(Mr. Fernandez de Cossio, Cuba)

49. While placing its hopes in the role that the United Nations could play in international cooperation for development, his delegation rejected the attempts being made to distort that role and to reduce its mandate in that sphere by restricting its activities to provision of conditional technical and humanitarian aid. The view that international cooperation was a part of the processes of peace-keeping and preventive diplomacy contradicted the spirit and purpose of the Charter and undermined the legal basis adopted in the course of many years of effort and dialogue.

50. If it really wished to promote effective international cooperation for development and to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that field, the Committee must work at its current session towards the fulfilment of decisions adopted and undertakings entered into by all, according particular attention to the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

51. In recent years there had been several attempts to use the Committee as a forum for the promotion and imposition of neo-liberal economic models drawn up in the North, as part of the process of recolonization that characterized the new world order. The increasing conditionality attached to external aid had compelled the third world countries to liberalize and restructure their economies at considerable social and human cost, in return for artificial and sporadic economic growth that did nothing to resolve the problems of underdevelopment. Such ideologically inspired models invoked efficiency as the end justifying unfair means, claiming that a totally free market led naturally to efficiency. But experience had shown that such models merely served to increase the wealth of one quarter of humanity, sacrificing the other three quarters to the currency speculators, increasing unemployment, creating millions of poor and homeless persons in poor and rich countries alike, promoting unsustainable lifestyles, squandering non-renewable resources, and threatening the planet with ecological destruction. The social and political consequences of such doctrines were already apparent in the world's richest economy.

52. The disadvantages Cuba faced as an underdeveloped country were being compounded by the political changes in Eastern Europe and the demise of the Soviet Union, which had led to the abrupt curtailment of Cuba's traditional economic links. In the course of just two years, Cuba's products had lost 70 per cent of their purchasing power. Cuba had not, however, abandoned its development priorities, and had avoided reductions in its social security, health and education programmes. In addition to those adverse factors, Cuba had also to contend for the past 30 years, with the criminal economic embargo imposed on it by the United States. That embargo was now being stepped up, the purpose being to precipitate a social and political crisis. Although the General Assembly had repeatedly deplored the use of economic measures as a means of coercion against developing countries and had called upon the international community to take urgent measures to eliminate such practices, the Organization as a whole had failed in its duty to take urgent and effective steps to halt that embargo.

53. Mr. GHAREKHAN (India) said that, like most developing countries, India had undertaken far-reaching reforms aimed at deregulation, privatization, the freeing of markets, liberalization of the external sector and attracting foreign direct investment. In those efforts, it needed the continued understanding and cooperation of its developed country partners. If the international economic environment remained inhospitable to the developing countries, such national efforts would be frustrated. The recent upheaval in currency markets underscored the need for enhanced macroeconomic surveillance and coordination, as proposed by the Group of 77. In addition to disaster relief, conflict resolution and humanitarian assistance, the United Nations should play an enhanced role in promoting development in the developing countries and continue to debate the complexities and anomalies of the world economy, without losing sight of the holistic vision of its founding fathers.

54. The availability of finances on an assured and stable basis was essential to United Nations operations. If resources continued to dry up, so would activity. The problems of duplication, waste and fragmentation should also be addressed. Multinational assistance should be voluntary, without conditions and flexible, and programming and execution of operational activities should be the responsibility of developing countries.

55. The United Nations drew strength from the principles of multilateralism, which could be jeopardized by unilateral actions and conditionalities. There was a danger that regional trading blocs could become inward-looking groupings, particularly in the developing world. India attached great importance to a balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations. Developing countries needed greater market access, special and differential treatment, flexible trade policy instruments and liberalization of trade in agriculture and textiles. The rising tide of protectionism should be curbed.

56. India attached particular importance to the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights. The need to protect intellectual property had to be balanced against the need for developing countries to devise laws specific to their own requirements, with due regard to the developmental and public policy dimensions.

57. Increasing resource flows was a matter of priority for the developing countries. His delegation hoped that Governments would be spurred to achieve the target of devoting 0.7 per cent of their GNP to official development assistance. Developed countries should encourage private investment in developing countries. The resource base of the multilateral financial institutions must be further strengthened, and concessional lending by the International Development Association substantially increased in real terms, on the occasion of the tenth replenishment. Despite optimism generated by limited official and commercial debt arrangements, the external debt situation of developing countries continued to pose a serious threat to their economic viability. A comprehensive debt strategy should encompass all types of debt and debtor countries and should be based on economic rather than political

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

considerations. It was particularly important to examine the resource requirements of low-income countries such as India which had met their debt service commitments in a timely fashion.

58. Agenda 21 and the various agreements that had emerged from the Rio Conference must be implemented as a matter of urgency. To that end, commitments to provide adequate, new and additional resources and technology to developing countries on non-commercial and preferential terms must be honoured. Developed countries' agreement to make initial financial commitments at the current session of the General Assembly would give effect to the Conference decision. The Commission on Sustainable Development should be a forum for cooperation, rather than for mutual recriminations and interference. It should be large enough to be representative, constituted on the basis of equitable geographical representation, and located so as to facilitate the widest possible participation. It must regularly review cross-sectoral commitments, particularly on finance and technology, and might review the aggregate impact of national policies to promote sustainable development.

59. It was generally recognized that energy consumption in developing countries must inevitably grow. India attached considerable importance to the promotion of non-conventional sources of energy, particularly solar and wind energy. Through research and development, it was making determined efforts to achieve a breakthrough that would make those sources of energy technically and economically feasible. His delegation hoped that international cooperative research, information-sharing and funding would be facilitated both bilaterally and multilaterally.

60. Mr. GALBADRAKH (Mongolia) said that the overall economic environment during the previous year had been extremely complex, and the economic recession in the industrialized nations had further widened the tremendous gap between North and South. The least developed countries, and those undergoing transition to a market economy, like Mongolia, continued to experience difficulty in dismantling the old economic structures and laying the foundations for new patterns of development.

61. Many developing countries had worked hard to implement policies aimed at a radical restructuring of their economies, combating inflation and creating a climate conducive to foreign investment. While it was true that every country was responsible for its own economic and social development, it was equally true that the international community had a collective responsibility to promote growth and well-being in the developing countries. It was becoming increasingly evident that the prosperity of the developed world could not be divorced from that of the developing countries. The aspirations of the developing countries to achieve pivotal development objectives were outlined in the final documents of the Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as in recent key texts of the United Nations.

(Mr. Galbadrakh, Mongolia)

62. Realistic approaches and innovative solutions must speedily be found to the international debt problem, which threatened the stability of the entire world economy. His delegation welcomed the efforts and progress made in the negotiations on debt rescheduling and debt forgiveness. Stronger support should be given to such ideas as debt-for-equity swaps, debt-for-nature swaps and debt-for-development swaps.

63. Mongolia was in favour of regional integration agreements and welcomed the emergence of trading blocs world wide. However, the process of multilateral trade liberalization would suffer a severe setback if the formation of regional trade and economic arrangements were to entail higher barriers vis-à-vis other parts of the world. His delegation took the view that barriers against non-participants must be reduced concurrently with the establishment of the new regional arrangements. In that context, the major trading countries must intensify their efforts to bring the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations to a satisfactory and balanced conclusion.

64. Mongolia attached great importance to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Successful and timely implementation of Agenda 21 programmes would enhance the prospects for sustainable development. It was to be hoped that, at its current session, the General Assembly would take appropriate decisions on the organizational aspects of the follow-up activities to the Conference, and, in particular, on the functions and structure of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Commission's composition must reflect the interests of all countries, particularly the developing countries. His delegation also looked forward to cooperating with other delegations on the issue of concluding a convention to combat desertification.

65. Mongolia welcomed the growing role played by the United Nations in international cooperation for the revitalization of economic growth in the 1990s. By virtue of the expertise it had accumulated over nearly half a century, the United Nations was uniquely qualified to serve as a forum for the discussion of development strategies and policies. It must thus undertake bold, innovative and perhaps even painful reform measures in order to enhance the effectiveness of its activities, especially in the economic and social fields. Mongolia welcomed the ongoing process of restructuring, and endorsed the view that the structures and agendas of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should be reviewed and the subsidiary bodies further streamlined. The high-level and coordination segments of the first substantive session of the Economic and Social Council held in July had marked an important step in the restructuring process.

66. Miss Diop (Senegal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

67. Mr. BRAISH (Afghanistan) said that the slow-down in economic activity, the deterioration in the terms of trade, high levels of unemployment and inflation, the drying up of multilateral concessional flows for development, insecurity and insufficiency of food supplies, rigid and unfavourable terms for transfer of technology and hardening of conditionalities had all seriously hindered the efforts of the developing countries to achieve economic growth and promote social and economic development. Many developing countries' per capita GNP had fallen, export earnings had declined ominously, despite efforts by commodity-dependent developing countries to pursue export expansion; at the same time, the burden of debt service had increased dramatically. Attempts to expand export earnings in the agricultural and industrial sectors had been hampered by an erosion of multilateral discipline that had permitted a rise of protectionism, particularly in its selective and discriminatory non-tariff forms.

68. The problems facing land-locked developing countries were particularly acute; special and immediate alleviation measures should be taken for such countries as specified in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. No development policy could be just and realistic unless it took their special needs, problems and rights into consideration. In the context of revitalizing development, growth and international trade, the principles of respect for independence and national sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign nations, equality and non-discrimination must be observed.

69. Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries was the proper means of securing rational and efficient use of their human, material, financial and technological resources. Such cooperation would contribute to strengthening solidarity and collective self-reliance among developing countries, and would diversify their economic relations. It would also be seen as the expression of their political will to achieve economic independence. However, cooperation among developing countries would certainly be more fruitful if coupled with constructive cooperation between developed and developing countries. In that regard, Afghanistan welcomed Agenda 21.

70. While Afghanistan had recovered its sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned and Islamic character it had paid a heavy price: 14 years of war had produced enormous destruction and left over a million dead and more than 2 million disabled; in addition nearly 6 million had taken refuge in neighbouring countries and 2 million had been internally displaced. It was now faced with the task of having to rebuild its entire economic and social infrastructure. He thanked those countries that had stood beside the Afghan nation, and expressed the hope that Member States would extend their full support to draft resolutions to be submitted under agenda item 141.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
8th meeting
held on
Thursday, 8 October 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mrs. AGGREY-ORLEANS (Ghana) said that she fully endorsed the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77. The Second Committee had begun to work against a backdrop of global economic crisis which affected both the developed and developing countries and thus underlined their interdependence. That crisis was so serious that world output per capita had decreased by over 2 per cent in 1991.

2. The terms of trade of the developing countries continued to be adversely affected by a fall in the prices of primary commodities accompanied by an exorbitant increase in the prices of the goods and services they required for their development. Moreover, their debt burden was such that the developing countries had become net exporters of capital to the industrialized countries.

3. The World Economic Survey of 1992 pointed out the likely persistence of the crisis unless fundamental adjustment measures were taken. As both the Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund and the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization had recently emphasized, a structural change in the general economic climate was required in order to complement the efforts of the developing countries to carry out their development programmes.

4. The World Economic Survey of 1992 had also found that the 10 per cent increase in the volume of exports from developing countries amounted to only a 5 per cent increase in terms of value due to a fall in average export prices. According to the 1992 UNDP Report, the external debt of developing countries had increased from about US$ 650 billion in 1980 to US$ 1,350 billion in 1990.

5. In Africa, the economic situation was particularly disturbing. The final review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD) carried out by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session had concluded (resolution 46/151) that the goals of economic recovery and sustained development had not been achieved. In his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General stated that most Africans were poorer today than they had been when their countries achieved independence in the late 1950s to 1960s. Africa was the only region where the number of people living in poverty was likely to increase by the year 2000. It was also the only region of the world whose total debt equalled or exceeded its economic output. That situation was compounded by the drought in southern Africa, in spite of the socially costly economic restructuring measures which many African countries, including Ghana, continued to pursue.

6. In those circumstances, the United Nations should seize the unmatched opportunity presented by the ending of the cold war to discharge its Charter obligation "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom" and play a central role in international economic cooperation.

(Mrs. Aggrey-Orleans, Ghana)

7. Structural adjustment was essential, but it would be ineffective unless it was accompanied by meaningful debt relief, increased flow of financial resources, more equitable prices for basic commodities and a more balanced international trading system. In that regard, the early conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations assumed new urgency.

8. The New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (resolution 46/151, annex) offered a unique framework for action by both Governments and the United Nations system based on shared responsibility and partnership. In it, the international community renewed its commitment to support the efforts which Africa, for its part, firmly intended to make in order to achieve sustained and lasting development. More than 30 African countries had already undertaken structural adjustment policies and the process of democratization had gathered momentum. The international community, for its part, should implement the commitments it had undertaken under the New Agenda, and the United Nations, which should play a major part in the implementation of the Agenda, should devise specific programmes for action which were consistent with it and should ensure follow-up and monitoring of its implementation. It was therefore deeply disappointing that almost a year after its adoption the New Agenda had not yet been formally launched by the United Nations.

9. It was true that the United Nations system had elaborated a System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development (E/AC.51/1992/5). That Plan should incorporate a mechanism enabling the bodies and agencies of the system to review their programmes and activities under the Plan - thus enabling the United Nations system to respond to the New Agenda in a more dynamic and flexible manner.

10. The eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) had ended with the adoption of the "Cartagena Commitment", which took into particular account the needs of the developing countries. It was to be hoped that the recommendations designed to correct major distortions in world commodity markets and to enhance the technological capacities of the developing countries would be implemented.

11. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) had been a historic event to which follow-up action in the new spirit of cooperation forged after the Conference was urgent. It was essential that the high-level United Nations commission on sustainable development, the establishment of which was indispensable to the implementation of Agenda 21, should be created during the current session.

12. It was also to be hoped that the new spirit of cooperation would mark the triennial review at the current session of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. That review should lead to the adoption of an approach seeking to integrate programmes and projects of the United Nations system into national development plans.

(Mrs. Aggrey-Orleans, Ghana)

13. Her delegation continued to believe that the United Nations was the appropriate forum for addressing economic and environmental issues and dealing with the challenges which undermined international peace and security.

14. Mr. OULD EL GHAOUTH (Mauritania), speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Arab Maghreb Union, said that he fully supported the important statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 by the representative of Pakistan. At the current session, the task of the Committee would be facilitated by the UNCED deliberations and decisions, by the eighth session of UNCTAD and by the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council. However, the Committee was meeting at a time when the world economy showed a decline in global production, an unprecedented increase in unemployment, a deterioration of the terms of trade, and monetary instability.

15. The situation was so alarming that the international community could obviously not count on market forces alone for improvement. Indeed, the difficult, not to say painful, structural adjustment measures that the developing countries had been forced to take would not allow them to revive their economies unless they found a favourable international economic environment. It was therefore imperative that growth in the large industrialized countries should be sustained and non-inflationary. Their generally slow growth was actually casting a shadow over the economic prospects of the developing countries. That situation was exacerbated by the trends towards recession and a perceptible weakening of the traditional economic bonds between developed and developing countries.

16. The weakening was nowhere so clear as in the commodities sector. There, prices had continued to fall and protectionist measures had increased, a matter of concern especially to the developing countries most dependent on commodity exports or to the most indebted ones. It was to be hoped that the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations aimed at setting up an open multilateral system of trade would be concluded as soon as possible.

17. The outcome of the adjustment process in developing countries depended in large measure on access to the markets of the developed countries. The Arab Maghreb Union was convinced in that connection of the need to strengthen its bonds with the European Community. The mutual interests of the two groups and the stability of the Mediterranean region were at stake.

18. As to the external debt crisis, the strategies being followed to solve that problem must be reconsidered and modified as required: the rescheduling of debts from year to year, together with adjustment measures, might improve the financial situation in the short term, but without alleviating the long-term overall burden; and in fact, Africa's outstanding debt was continually increasing and at the current time amounted to more than 236.7 billion dollars. That situation was aggravated by high real interest rates, the unwillingness of commercial banks to grant further loans and the stagnation of official development aid. The statements made in the plenary

(Mr. Ould El Ghaouth, Mauritania)

Assembly by the ministers of the Maghreb States told of the sufferings being endured by hundreds of millions in the African countries. Greater attention must be given to the critical situation in Africa, because such economic recession, such endemic unemployment and such social distress could well lead to political instability.

19. In order to deal with the root of the debt problem, the first task was to improve the position of the financial institutions by making available to them resources commensurate with the objectives, especially at the time of the tenth replenishment of the resources of the International Development Association. In addition, a concerted effort by all parties was needed to raise the overall volume of official development assistance and improve its effectiveness, if the developing countries were to pursue their adjustment policies in a climate of growth. Certainly at a time when the least developed countries and other African countries were moving from an emergency situation to a phase of economic recovery, outside help remained a necessity for them.

20. The drought-induced crisis that gripped vast parts of the African continent was not over, and emergency assistance would still in many cases be needed in 1993. In that connection, the implementation of the recommendations of the Rio Summit, especially the setting up of an intergovernmental mechanism to draft an international convention to combat desertification, would be particularly useful. As to the establishment of a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development, that might provide the appropriate framework for a new global partnership. Thought must also be given to the most effective means of ensuring the integrated application of the whole range of decisions contained in Agenda 21. The signing of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity by an impressive number of Heads of State and Government was to be applauded.

21. It was clear that the future would depend in large part on the extent of international economic cooperation among the countries of all regions. The member countries of the Arab Maghreb Union would continue to play their part in that process. The promotion of economic integration and the maintenance of the Arab Maghreb Union's stability were indispensable to the realization of the general goals of the United Nations.

22. Mr. TÜRK (Slovenia) observed that a number of new Member States were participating in the General Assembly for the first time, as an outcome of the process of democratization that had put an end to the divisions of the cold war. It was imperative for the international community to facilitate their integration into the world economy on the basis of the principle of the sovereign equality of States. It was therefore vital to support the economic reforms under way in the countries in transition. The world economy as a whole would benefit.

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

23. Slovenia, the most developed republic of the former Yugoslav federation, had been the first victim of intervention by the Yugoslav army. Although Slovenia had suffered significantly less from the Yugoslav crisis than had some other republics, it had experienced considerable economic damage and its gross domestic product (GDP) had declined by about 15 per cent. Nevertheless, the Slovenian economy, traditionally export-oriented, mainly towards Western markets, was gradually recovering, and Slovenia already showed a balance-of-payments surplus. A new currency had been introduced in 1991 and the Government attached great importance to stabilization of inflation, which had reached 21 per cent per month. It had begun a process of restructuring and privatization of the Slovenian economy, and foreign trade was already significantly liberalized. His Government was encouraging foreign investment, and foreign companies and banks had already begun to establish themselves in Slovenia.

24. It was significant that two thirds of the country's exports were going to the member countries of the European Community. Slovenia was currently negotiating a trade and cooperation agreement with the European Community, which it hoped one day to join, for historical as well as economic reasons.

25. At the same time, Slovenia wanted to broaden the existing cooperation with the developing countries.

26. The political situation in Slovenia was stable. However, although the economic consequences of the military intervention of the Yugoslav army were slowly being eliminated, the influx of refugees still represented a tremendous burden. In contrast, the economic situation of war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia called for broad assistance from the international community. The same was true of Macedonia, which was not yet a Member of the United Nations and which, although not at war, was suffering the economic consequences of the war being fought elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia. Without international solidarity, those countries would not have sufficient resources to ensure their economic recovery and development at a pace compatible with their integration into the world economy.

27. Many speakers had emphasized the importance of operational activities for development, and the broad support expressed for reforming the financing and governance of those activities would certainly contribute to the adoption of important decisions, possibly during the forty-seventh session. The focus on field activities had proven justified, despite a few problems in coordinating them. Slovenia supported the principles of universality and neutrality applied in United Nations assistance, as well as the grant nature of its operational activities.

28. In the area of development, Slovenia highly commended the outstanding role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and it was very interested in continuing and strengthening its cooperation with the Programme. To that end, an agreement on cooperation should be concluded as

(Mr. Türk, Slovenia)

soon as possible between UNDP and Slovenia. Such agreements between UNDP and the new States would make it possible to bring those States into UNDP projects or to continue existing projects without interruption.

29. He concluded by noting that, during the cold war, international institutional arrangements had been unable to bring about economic cooperation and integration. Despite the problems of the world economy and, in particular, those affecting the developing countries, political cooperation would increase the possibilities for solving certain basic problems of the world economy. It was in that spirit that Slovenia supported the follow-up activities on the Rio Conference on Environment and Development. In the same spirit, it hoped that the Uruguay Round would yield important results - particularly with respect to the liberalization of trade in textiles, agriculture and services - and that better market access would be granted to the products of the developing countries. Slovenia hoped soon to become a member of all the international economic institutions of the United Nations system, because it was convinced of the vital importance of international economic cooperation.

30. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

31. Mrs. DES ILES (Trinidad and Tobago) said that her country fully supported the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77, which eloquently described the crisis in the countries of the South. For more than 10 years, the majority of the world's population had seen a catastrophic decline in its standard of living, accompanied by a breakdown of the social fabric, which threatened both democracy and international peace and security.

32. The debt crisis had reduced the capacity of the developing countries to meet the basic needs of their populations. To resolve it, it would be necessary to find innovative, bold approaches to all types of debts. The General Assembly must continue to play its role in seeking a collective solution.

33. The deterioration of the terms of trade also continued to hinder the economic recovery of the developing countries. In the short term, the effects of the structural adjustment programmes they had implemented had been negative, and she hoped that the Bretton Woods institutions would take a fresh approach that would make it possible to implement social protection measures to prevent any further deterioration of the situation.

34. It was paradoxical, to say the least, that, as soon as the countries of the South had agreed to diversify their economies at great sacrifice, the countries of the North had erected trade barriers to their new products. At a time when the creation of economic "megablocs" loomed on the horizon, the Uruguay Round was at a standstill. The industrialized countries had agreed to take steps to liberalize trade and control non-tariff barriers, but those promises had not been kept. Many now chose to seek solutions outside the multilateral mechanism. The universalization of the General Agreement of

(Mrs. Des Iles, Trinidad and Tobago)

Tariffs and Trade (GATT) had improved the Organization's ability to carry out its mandate to promote international free trade for the benefit of all countries. It was important for the contracting parties to take urgent action to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion and for the developed countries to improve their coordination on macroeconomic policy.

35. The time had come to follow up the decisions reached by the international community at the Rio Conference. Priority should be given to implementing the activities outlined in "Agenda 21", and the developed countries must fulfil their obligations. For their part, the developing countries would be required to invest substantial resources in order to integrate the issues of environment and development into their national strategies while fostering human development and protecting the most vulnerable segments of their population.

36. In the course of its forty-seventh session, it would be necessary for the General Assembly to establish the Commission on Sustainable Development. It would also be necessary for it to begin preparations for the global conference on the sustainable development of small island States: the global conference on integrated management and sustainable development of coastal and marine areas, and negotiations on the conclusion of an international convention to control desertification. With respect to desertification, she applauded the Organization for its humanitarian assistance to the drought-stricken countries of Africa and hoped that the international community would continue to support its efforts.

37. Mr. KHOUINI (Tunisia) said that his delegation fully subscribed to the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77, of which Tunisia was a member. The major changes which had occurred at international level had promoted the emergence of the true interdependence of nations and the globalization of problems, while stimulating the hope of a better world where the fight against underdevelopment would be a key concern of the international community. Unfortunately, that momentum was slowed by the decline of the world economy and more particularly the economies of the developing countries. Moreover, according to various studies, that negative trend would continue in the coming years if vigorous measures were not taken at national and international levels.

38. Growth was directly linked to international competitiveness and to more open markets. It was also dependent on closer links of cooperation in macroeconomic terms in order to safeguard against world savings being invested in a small number of countries with strong currencies and against continually rising interest rates. The international community, in particular the industrialized countries, had a duty to ensure the growth and stability of the world economy, notably by providing technical and financial assistance to developing countries.

39. As the main factor responsible for the dwindling flow of finance, debt was the major preoccupation of the developing countries. The solution to the

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

debt problem required determined efforts on the part of all those concerned. Tunisia was pleased that new options had been proposed in recent years, but believed that the measures recommended and the results obtained were far from satisfactory. The lasting solution to the debt crisis was necessarily dependent on a global strategy aimed at reducing the principal and servicing on all forms of debt for all categories of debtor countries. It also depended on the adoption of measures intended to alleviate debt, such as debt-for-nature swaps.

40. International trade had grown at an uneven pace, while protectionism and insufficient income from the export of commodities compromised growth in the developing countries. Tunisia called for a strengthening of commercial trade in the context of the international trade order arising from multilateral negotiations and for the developing countries to take part in the decision-making in that respect. The Uruguay Round should be rapidly brought to a close.

41. In Africa, economic growth had not surpassed population growth; no improvement in poverty had therefore been recorded. Tunisia welcomed the adoption of the new United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development for the 1990s and hoped that it would be supported by the international community. It also attached great importance to an international conference on finance and development, the modalities of which should be settled at the current session.

42. Questions related to the environment and development ranked foremost in Tunisia's economic and social development strategy. In fact, there could be no sustainable development without a judicious policy on the use of resources. However, that question could only be settled on a global scale and should therefore continue to be a major concern of the international community, which had a duty to take all measures to ensure that the decisions taken at the Rio Conference were followed up. In addition, the developed countries were obliged to honour their commitments, to make additional new financial resources available to developing countries and to ensure the transfer of technology on preferential terms. In that regard, Tunisia welcomed the decision to establish the Commission on Sustainable Development and an intergovernmental committee responsible for negotiating the text of an international convention to control desertification.

43. He recalled that Tunisia had already put forward various ideas and proposals aimed at promoting a world economic environment which was more favourable to development and therefore to creating conditions of peace and security for all. According to the Tunisian President, work should be done on concluding a "progress and development pact" between the industrialized and the developing countries.

44. Mr. BURAVKIN (Belarus) pointed out that, over the past year, Belarus, like many States on the territory of the former Soviet Union, had crossed a new frontier in the transition towards a market economy with complete political and economic independence. It had begun to take its place on the international economic and political arena, having been recognized by over 100 States, with most of which it had now established diplomatic ties. The number of countries with which Belarus enjoyed mutually beneficial economic and trade relations was constantly growing. While seeking to maintain and strengthen its relations of cooperation with the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Belarus had begun to institute closer economic and political ties with Europe, with which it was moving towards new economic relations.

45. Belarus would have to take its first steps towards independence in particularly difficult conditions, as the former administrative structures were being dismantled in the context of the tragic consequences of the largest peace-time nuclear disaster, namely the Chernobyl accident. Moreover, the internal and external economic situations were continually worsening. The gross national product of Belarus, which for two years had dropped by an average of 2 per cent, had fallen by an average of 13 per cent over the past eight months. The cost of living had increased four or five times. The cost of energy and other mineral resources, which Belarus continued to import from the Russian Federation and other States of the Commonwealth of Independent States, was constantly increasing. Belarus was feeling the full impact of the negative effects of the breakdown in economic relations in the former Soviet Union and of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

46. The extraordinary possibilities provided by the end of the cold war and the ideological conflict were not being fully exploited. That was naturally enough explained by the stagnant world economy. The logic of the new interdependent and intercomplementary world order was such that it was increasingly crucial for the international community to lend its active support to those States which were in transition to new economic and social structures. In that way, they could accelerate the transition process and limit the social, economic and environmental consequences.

47. As a newly independent State, Belarus had a much greater need of the international community in that it was leading a virtually single-handed struggle against the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. It was sufficient to say that, in recent years, that had absorbed 25 per cent of the State budget. The genetic inheritance of the nation should be safeguarded, and a safe environment should be created for future generations. For practically the last three years, all the bodies, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations had adopted resolutions on international cooperation to combat the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. A number of those bodies had begun to implement such resolutions: the World Health Organization, Habitat and the UNESCO/Chernobyl Programme, the Economic Commission for Europe and UNICEF. Non-governmental organizations, private individuals and the Governments of numerous countries also deserved mention. However, one could not help but note with bitterness that, during the past

(Mr. Buravkin, Belarus)

year, the activities of United Nations bodies in that area had begun to slow down. The completion of the various projects of the joint cooperation plan were still at the stage of preliminary studies. Internal coordination in the United Nations was inadequate, one reason being the wholly unwarranted hold placed on the establishment of a competent body in the Secretariat.

48. It was clear that a State could not eliminate its budgetary deficit when tens of thousands of roubles were being spent on combating the consequences of a national tragedy. His country was facing the dual task of overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and introducing a new market economy in a young democratic State. Parliament had passed several laws establishing the legal foundations for a new economy and a new organization of society. The Government was taking various measures to apply these laws and end the economic crisis, with the aid of the international community. His country was taking part in a process which had been launched in Washington in January 1992. Following the decisions taken in February and May it was now receiving technical assistance from UNDP. In July it had been admitted to the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. A cooperation process had also been launched at the European level. His Government now faced the task of coordinating those various strands of international aid and therefore attached the greatest importance to the physical presence of international organizations, including the United Nations, on its territory. As a result of vigorous efforts by the Secretary-General and the Administrator of UNDP, a temporary United Nations/UNDP office had been opened in Minsk. At the same time, his country was doing everything within its power to end the economic crisis and increase its capacity to aid the developing countries, both on a bilateral basis and through the United Nations system. It would therefore be useful to establish a specific fund to finance the aid programme for Belarus as part of its cooperation with UNDP.

49. The scope for development cooperation offered by the United Nations would be considerably enhanced by implementing the principles set out in the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session, in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, and in the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio and of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Cartagena. The general consensus which had emerged in Rio created possibilities for multilateral cooperation on environmental protection, but they were just that - possibilities. Consequently, the Commission on Sustainable Development and its subsidiary bodies needed to be given the institutional means to develop multilateral cooperation tailored to the needs of all States.

50. The economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and, in particular, the Economic and Social Council, could make a substantial contribution to maintaining peace and security. There was a need to strengthen activities concerning early warning and prevention of developments

(Mr. Buravkin, Belarus)

which adversely affected the economic and social life of countries, regions, and the world as a whole. In that connection, his delegation stressed the value of the proposal made by the Secretary-General in his report on preventive diplomacy that a reinvigorated and restructured Economic and Social Council should report to the Security Council, in accordance with Article 65 of the Charter, on those economic and social developments that might, unless mitigated, threaten international peace and security. Unfortunately, tragic events continued to multiply and the economic and social bodies of the United Nations could not stand aside while present and future generations were threatened by warfare which, although not global and thermonuclear, was none the less bloody and undermined faith in human intelligence and the superior worth of mankind.

51. Mr. AL-HAJRI (United Arab Emirates) said that the end of the cold war provided the international community with an opportunity to pay closer attention to the problems of development and international economic cooperation and to devote more financial and other resources to resolving the economic problems of the developing countries. It was all the more vital to seize that opportunity now that there was growing consensus on development following the disappearance of the political and ideological divisions which had previously been so crucial. It was up to the United Nations to ensure that, in future, political developments were shaped by economic factors, since peace, development and justice were inseparable goals, as the Economic and Social Council had reaffirmed during its most recent session.

52. The beginning of the final decade of the twentieth century had been marked by developments and upheavals which had been highly contradictory in nature. The benefits of the current progress in science and technology remained beyond the reach of hundreds of millions of the world's inhabitants and the global economic environment was reducing the prospects for growth in the developing countries, with indebtedness leading to negative transfers of resources, the industrialized countries closing off their markets through various protectionist measures, decline in the price of the raw materials or manufactured products exported by developing countries, obstacles to technology transfer, and the drying up of appropriate foreign investment. Many developing countries had seen their economic and social situation deteriorate, which in turn affected the world economy and also stability, security and peace.

53. There was a need to review the United Nations mechanisms in the economic and social sectors in order to eliminate duplication between the institutions and programmes responsible for operational activities for development. He therefore welcomed the intention expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization to focus the forthcoming measures to restructure the economic and social sectors of the Secretariat on research, policy analysis, operational activities and humanitarian assistance. Reorganization must respond to the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in international cooperation for development and be based on

(Mr. Al-Hajri, United Arab Emirates)

the principles of the Charter, namely the universality of the United Nations, equality between States and non-intervention in internal affairs. In addition, geographical balance should govern representation on the governing bodies of the various parts of the systems.

54. Efforts to tackle the question of environment and development were opening up fresh prospects for international cooperation for development. In that connection, the Rio Conference had awakened the world to the need for a development process that did not jeopardize future generations. As the Secretary-General had said, it had marshalled political commitment at the highest level and placed the issue of sustainable development at the heart of the international agenda. At its current session, the General Assembly would be establishing the institutional framework for the implementation of Agenda 21, and it was vital that there should be proper geographical and sectoral representation of all States in all the bodies created for that purpose, particularly the future Commission on Sustainable Development and its secretariat.

55. The United Arab Emirates hoped that the Uruguay Round, within the framework of GATT, would be successful. The adoption of unified trading rules was essential for the establishment of an equitable international trade system which would guarantee competition while encouraging the opening up of markets and ending the marginalization of the developing countries in the world economy. In addition, it welcomed the results of the most recent United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and in particular the Cartagena Commitment containing the principles of a new partnership for development. They also stressed the importance of cooperation between the countries of the South, which was a precondition for their integration in world trade and which would enable them to obtain the best terms for their commodities and would facilitate the revival of the North-South dialogue. Without that dialogue there could be no consensus on questions relating to economic and social development in the world.

56. Although it was a small developing country, the United Arab Emirates had attached great importance to building up infrastructure and basic institutions and the deployment of human resources, while at the same time assuming its responsibilities in respect of international economic cooperation by providing assistance to numerous developing countries, particularly the least developed countries of Africa and Asia. That assistance involved both the implementation of development projects and humanitarian relief in the event of disasters and emergencies.

57. Mr. LONDOALE (Zaire) said that the Second Committee was beginning its deliberations at a time when the fundamental changes which had occurred in international relations were opening up new perspectives, at the same time as giving cause for concern - due, in particular, to military instability, the excessive indebtedness of the third world, a continuing deterioration in the terms of trade, famine, stagnation in development assistance, unemployment, the failure of the Uruguay Round negotiations, and environmental degradation.

(Mr. Londoale, Zaire)

58. In view of the unprecedented discrepancy between policies and economic reality, the international community must establish effective cooperation in order to revive the economic growth of the developing countries and to alleviate their debt.

59. Africa, which would contain a fifth of the world population by the year 2000, had been crushed by a debt amounting to $275 billion, representing 90 per cent of its GDP and absorbing 21 per cent of its income from exports, as against 19 per cent in 1990. The funds absorbed by debt-servicing exceeded the amount the African countries received from new loans. Whatever might be said, the poorer countries were continuing to enrich the more wealthy countries, and Zaire queried the legitimacy of arrangements for the repayment of a debt which continued to increase; furthermore, recession and political instability in Africa had been exacerbated by the customs barriers established by the developed countries, high interest rates and the reluctance of the banks to agree to loans. Only an advisory committee responsible for debt and development, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, might find a lasting solution to the problem. His country supported the efforts made to conclude international agreements aimed at stabilizing commodity prices and to achieve economic integration. In that connection, his country had signed, in June 1991, the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, whose aim was to promote inter-African cooperation at a time when new trading relationships were being established in Europe and North America. There was a need to strengthen South-South cooperation in order to reinvigorate African economies and to follow up the recommendations of the Economic Commission for Africa in the interests of elaborating the new development strategy for the 1990s, in such a way that it benefited Africa and, thereby, humanity as a whole. Zaire therefore favoured the convening of an international conference on development financing.

60. His country approved the measures proposed at the Rio Conference in behalf of the countries which were protecting their forests, and called upon the international community to make available the additional resources needed to implement Agenda 21 and the related conventions and arrangements.

61. His country was currently undergoing a deep multisectoral economic crisis, which was largely due to maladministration, further exacerbated by riots and looting. In 1991, Zaire's economy had declined by 7.3 per cent, and inflation had increased to 4,500 per cent. Production facilities were totally disorganized, and the external debt was overwhelming. Zaire appealed to the international community for assistance in achieving economic transition. It hoped that the affluent countries would take account of the efforts made by Zaire, Africa and the third world to establish a democratic system and to restructure their economies, and that they would understand that they should extend their cooperation with those countries. The United Nations had a decisive role to play in reformulating a new economic order, particularly with regard to the development of the third world, and it was to be hoped that it would take account of the needs of the countries to which the assistance of the United Nations and the specialized agencies could be particularly useful.

62. Mr. VILCHEZ (Nicaragua) said that his delegation agreed with the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and the Rio Group. The efforts of the developing countries to revitalize growth were confronted by closed markets, shortage of capital and foreign investment, the debt burden and restrictions on technology transfer. Armed conflicts and natural disasters served merely to worsen the situation. Underdevelopment and poverty were the main causes of the conflicts now threatening international peace and security. There could be no peace without development and, conversely, there could be no development without peace.

63. Having experienced a long political and military conflict and a number of natural disasters, Nicaragua was more than ever in need of humanitarian, technical and financial assistance. The World Bank had emphasized the difficult circumstances which his country was currently undergoing, so that it had been possible, on a provisional basis, to have access to funds from the International Development Association, while UNDP had granted it the same treatment as it did to the least developed countries, although it was not classified officially as such. His delegation hoped that the international community would take due account of that fact. It would in due course make proposals for obtaining, as a matter of urgency, support from United Nations bodies in order to bring about the country's economic and social reconstruction.

64. In that connection, his delegation regarded as important the restructuring of the economic and social fields now under way, provided that the objectives proposed were given genuinely tangible form. It supported the proposals of the Secretary-General, which would ensure greater coordination between the various bodies. It also welcomed the proposals for reform put forward by the administrations of UNDP and UNICEF.

65. The revitalization of the Economic and Social Council, aimed at eliminating overlapping and at giving concrete form to the objectives of North-South cooperation, would facilitate implementation of the principal aspects of the revised proposal from the Nordic countries and would ensure greater coordination between the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions. That would facilitate channelling official development assistance towards priority activities.

66. Mr. SOH (Republic of Korea) said that the past year had been marked both by favourable developments in political cooperation and by persistent stagnation in the world economy due to the absence of economic cooperation. For the first time since the Second World War, global output had declined: a meagre increase in the GDP of the developed countries had been overshadowed by the deterioration of the economies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. There had clearly been a detrimental effect on the developing world. Although a 3.2 per cent GDP growth rate had been recorded for the developing countries as an aggregate in 1991, that progress had not been at all geographically balanced. While growth had been strong in East and South-East Asia, there had been virtually no change in per capita incomes in Africa and,

(Mr. Soh, Republic of Korea)

perhaps most ominous, in nearly half the developing countries per capita output had fallen or stagnated during 1991. Economic stagnation of such global proportions had never been recorded in the history of the United Nations. The slow growth of the world economy could be attributed in part to insufficient commitment to market liberalization and transfer of technology. The developing countries were suffering from both the collapse of commodity prices and the low level of foreign aid.

67. On the other hand, it had been recognized that non-military threats to international security constituted a major obstacle to future peace and stability. It was now accepted that a global partnership between rich and poor nations of the world was the only way to address the potential crises of global poverty. Given the current state of the North-South dialogue, that recognition had not yet been reflected in improved ties between developed and developing countries. The fact that expanded trade and financial flows would nurture prosperity for both North and South was too easily ignored.

68. In the case of the Uruguay Round, currently at an impasse, what was needed was political will to accept a compromise, with the understanding that in the end all nations benefited from open markets. The Republic of Korea would participate actively in efforts to bring about balanced and comprehensive results for the current negotiations. In that context, the proliferation of regional economic arrangements was a matter for both optimism and concern. As long as the level of trade creation surpassed that of trade diversion from other countries, regional trading blocs would contribute to global growth. The temptation to resort to protectionism must be avoided, however, and General Assembly resolution 46/145 should be implemented. For their part, the developing countries had made great strides in trade liberalization as the Secretary-General of UNCTAD had observed. The change in development policies implemented by certain Governments in Latin America, South-East Asia and Africa were clearly reason for optimism. Nevertheless, developing countries should continue to attract foreign capital.

69. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had drawn long-overdue attention to two interrelated issues of global importance. However, at the same time as highlighting the link between environmental protection and development, it had also uncovered the differences in perspective of the developing and developed countries. By the year 2030, the world's population would have increased by 3.7 billion: food production would therefore need to double and industrial output and energy use in the developing countries would have to increase five times. Both developed and developing nations had responsibilities, therefore, and must recognize the urgent need for action. One fundamental concern was cost. Clearly, the high-income countries would have to play a major role in providing technology and finance for environmental protection. However, as in the case of trade, the benefits would accrue to all the world. The developing nations, for their part, would have to rely on their own resources to implement development policies which took into account environmental protection. All efforts should

(Mr. Soh, Republic of Korea)

be made to ensure that environmental protection and economic growth did not conflict. Extraneous environmental regulations should not impose undue financial burdens on the developing countries and the newly industrialized economies should be given the opportunity to realize their industrial potential.

70. If the United Nations was to have a substantial impact on the economic and social advances of the future, Member States would need to have the political will to reform the United Nations system. So far, the slow pace of change was disappointing. No noticeable progress had been made in the division of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Their mandates remained diluted and vague. It was to be hoped that a practical solution would be found during the current session. The humanitarian crises of the past year had demonstrated that the General Assembly could no longer waste time in unproductive debate on a vast array of agenda items. An action-oriented approach to streamlining the Second Committee's agenda must be considered.

71. Regarding operational activities for development, the lack of coordination among subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies had not been adequately addressed. The mere infusion of more funds and personnel would not suffice.

72. The Republic of Korea fully supported the efforts of the United Nations to strengthen its role in the economic and social fields. To that end, it would share the experience gained during the process of its own economic development, inter alia, through the transfer of technology to other developing countries. In addition, it was prepared to continue to provide, to the extent of its capabilities, emergency relief to the victims of natural disasters. Lastly, it was to be hoped that the deliberations of the Second Committee would reflect a commitment to action to that effect on the part of both developed and developing nations.

73. Mr. OKOBI (Nigeria) said that the emergence of new and sometimes tragic tensions had brought out the linkage between peace and security and economic and social progress and human rights. Economic despair and social injustice were among the deepest causes of conflict. The disappearance of competing ideologies and zones of influence meant that all countries must act collectively to create conditions for favourable development and respond to democratic aspirations. Yet, at the same time, disparities had continued to grow within and between nations. The international economic environment remained hostile to the developing countries which, increasingly denied market access, resource flows and foreign investment, suffered from a crushing debt burden, could not obtain the technology they needed and were frustrated by inequities in the world financial and trade system. The decade of the 1990s had begun badly for the developing countries, which had undergone an unprecedented decline in their per capita incomes, and boded ill for the new International Development Strategy. Growth in the industrialized countries

(Mr. Okobi, Nigeria)

was likely to be lower in the 1990s than in the 1980s, which would restrict the expansion of markets because of world economic interdependence. It was hard to see how the many countries which had based their economic development on exports could apply their strategies if world markets, investment and income did not increase, if the industrialized countries did not gain better results and if real long-term interest rates remained high. The Group of Seven should adjust their coordination policies more to the needs of the world economy. The Fourth Development Decade, like its predecessors, risked being lost for the developing countries. The economic transition under way in Eastern Europe and in the Commonwealth of Independent States, the problems facing Africa, indebtedness and shortage of investment in most developing countries, constituted formidable obstacles. The decrease in military expenditures by the major Powers had not yet produced the peace dividend expected, and delays in concluding the Uruguay Round raised the spectre of protectionism which would prevent the development of international trade.

74. The Rio Conference had drawn attention to the significance of development. It was important to begin to implement Agenda 21 and to give to the proposed Commission on Sustainable Development sufficient authority and flexibility. The Conference had emphasized that primary responsiblity for addressing global environmental issues belonged to the industrial countries, which, by sharing their technology and financial support, could help developing countries to meet their environmental challenges while speeding their development. Agenda 21 had created new opportunities for development requiring not only sufficient political will but, more especially, sufficient financial resources, whether Governments decided to achieve sustainable development in a national context or to give clear directions to the United Nations system in a global context.

75. Despite some anachronistic aspects, the end of the cold war had, on the whole, created new openings for economic, social and environmental cooperation, particularly in the area of trade. Therefore, it was paradoxical that, in six years, the Uruguay Round had not yielded the expected results. To abandon the negotiations would stall growth in the industrialized countries and slow down the process of integrating the developing countries into the world trading system. For that reason, the principles of free trade that had served the developed countries so well had to be extended to the protected sectors of agriculture and fisheries. The outstanding issues could not go unsolved any longer, because that would mean the end of the Uruguay Round.

76. Africa remained the most vulnerable factor in the international economic equation. Proposed solutions had not led to sustainable development there. Nor had the traditional recipes for structural adjustment yielded the desired results. International economic distortions were preventing Africa from putting to good use its scarce capital. Africa needed to industrialize, which meant enduring paralysing debt burdens, and to manage domestic demand in order to create the necessary surplus for economic growth. At the same time, the need for democracy in Africa called for massive inflows of development capital from the industrialized countries.

(Mr. Okobi, Nigeria)

77. For developing countries in general and Africa in particular, the most pressing of the many development challenges was the need to promote economic growth, and that required, in addition to solving current problems, which were likely to persist, the adoption of an integrated strategy. Therefore, a fundamental theme of the development dialogue should be the search for solutions at the global level to ensure balanced and accelerated economic growth and development for all, especially the developing countries. Ad hoc measures adopted by the major industrialized countries in response to crisis situations could not resolve interdependent world problems.

78. The debt crisis and poverty represented the two greatest obstacles to economic and social well-being in the majority of developing countries, and the time had come for creditor and debtor nations jointly to find a solution based on debt reduction or cancellation. Poverty was closely linked with indebtedness, and its eradication and the promotion of an equitable international economic system conducive to sustainable development were the responsibilities of all.

79. The United Nations should be at the forefront of efforts to tackle the dire problems facing the planet. Resolution 45/264 reaffirmed the necessity to restructure and revitalize the Organization in order to equip it for the new challenges facing the international community. Any discussion on international development cooperation should be at the macroeconomic level, as the Chairman of the Group of 77 had clearly stated. Neither the industrialized nor the developing countries could stand by while world economic and social development were threatened. The interests and future prospects of all were linked to the recovery of the international economy. As ideological confrontation receded, it was appropriate to reconsider a global strategy for growth, productive investment and development. Persistent imbalances in the world economy were not amenable to solutions based on national policies alone, and a concerted and comprehensive effort and strategy would be required to achieve sustained and balanced growth and eliminate inequities in the world's financial and trading systems and the vicious circle of poverty and violence.

80. The changes that had taken place in many parts of the world were reinforcing the peace and spreading hope and, therefore, prosperity. All countries must unite to develop further those changes and ensure prosperity and survival, without which the democracy called for could only be an empty word.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
9th meeting
held on
Thursday, 8 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLÓN	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)
later:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLÓN (Chairman)	(Uruguay)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. BORG (Malta) said that in their deliberations Member States tended to overlook the human element and to forget that human rights and human development were complementary and inseparable. Despite the growing consensus on the need for cooperation, measures taken to strengthen international cooperation remained disjointed. Member States now had an opportunity to rectify that situation by ensuring that developed and developing countries worked together to create a more hospitable international economic and social environment for future generations.

2. Trade, finance, technology and sustainable development had been identified as the key areas in which international cooperation for development must be improved, and dialogue as the mechanism whereby that improvement could effectively be achieved. His delegation welcomed the fact that Member States now placed the economic disparities existing in an interdependent world at the top of their global agenda.

3. A number of items on the Committee's agenda had one common element - development: not the development of one group of countries, but the development of all countries. In the coming weeks, the Committee would scrutinize issues and decide on future action to accelerate growth and strengthen sustainable development in Member States. Those decisions called for coordinated measures and the ability to prioritize issues requiring urgent action so as to achieve economic prosperity and social justice. His delegation thus welcomed the consensus on the need for the Organization to focus attention on the socio-economic sector of its work and the calls for its capacity and effectiveness to be enhanced to that end.

4. That global partnership had been evident at two important United Nations conferences held earlier that year: the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Cartagena Commitment of February 1992 reflected the efforts of all countries, rich and poor alike, to reach a common understanding on measures to improve the international trading system through regional and interregional cooperation in an effort to generate economic growth which, in turn, would promote job growth, investment opportunities, private enterprise, increased exports, financial stabilization and debt reduction; and, above all, give the courage needed to take bolder steps to alleviate poverty.

5. At the Conference on Environment and Development, sustainable development had become the password for the implementation of the goals and objectives of Agenda 21. His delegation thus looked forward to the follow-up to that Conference. The Commission on Sustainable Development must become the vehicle for advancing international cooperation and activities on environmental issues

(Mr. Borg, Malta)

with a direct influence on sustainable development. The important decisions taken at Rio de Janeiro must be the subject of important follow-up measures by the General Assembly, particularly with regard to the financing and implementation of Agenda 21. Non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to play an active part in those follow-up activities at national, regional and international levels.

6. His delegation also attached great importance to improving the functioning of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, with a view to achieving a transformation in global economic growth parallel to that being achieved on the international political scene. His delegation wished to see the United Nations strengthen its lead in development assistance, and to caution against the trend towards the fragmentation of that assistance. It noted with interest the proposal to establish a mechanism to coordinate the work of the various governing bodies involved in development asssistance, and favoured steps to improve coordination between the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions, including arrangements for reciprocal participation in meetings. Duplication of work between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should be reduced by streamlining the Council's agenda and work, and by assigning to it a more appropriate role of provision of policy guidance, without diminishing the overall responsibility of the General Assembly. The Committee must now join in the efforts of the Organization to give a human face to development.

7. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

8. Mr. FINAU (Fiji) said that the past year had seen a continuing trend towards the formation of regional trading blocs. Although such blocs were not necessarily harmful to the global trading system, or prohibited under GATT rules, their impact on the system remained a subject of debate. Many experts viewed those blocs as building blocks for the construction of a more open and liberal trading system; while others regarded them merely as stumbling blocks diverting attention from multilateral efforts to liberalize the world trading system. The costs of consolidation of the world economy into a few large trading blocs would be borne by those countries that were excluded: small, open, export-oriented developing countries.

9. If their further development was to be ensured, developing countries must be guaranteed greater market access for their products and a significant improvement in their terms of trade. A truly open and liberalized trading system was the only credible option for generalized prosperity and development. The Government of Fiji was committed to that objective: over the past three years its trade regime had been liberalized considerably; import quotas had been replaced with tariffs; and the Government was committed to continuous reductions in the overall level of import protection, and offered generous incentives to foreign investors.

(Mr. Finau, Fiji)

10. External debt continued to be a very serious problem for many developing countries. Clearly, attempts to solve the problem on a piecemeal basis would not be successful, and a lasting solution must encompass all types of debt, and include anticipatory measures to prevent a further spread of the debt problem. Debt reduction arrangements must not be confined to a few countries, but must be extended to all, including those struggling to honour their obligations. Sound macroeconomic management policies including careful control of government finance, of the sort pursued by his own Government, would help prevent the problem from recurring.

11. Increased resource flows, official, multilateral and private, were essential for the developing countries; yet both the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of GNP and the ODA target of 0.15 per cent of GNP for the least developed countries remained far from being achieved. The developed world must signal its commitment to enhancing developing countries' capacity to play a meaningful role in the world economy by working towards achieving those internationally agreed targets. On the other hand, it was encouraging to note that over the past two years the situation regarding the net transfer of resources from the developing to the developed countries had begun to show some improvement.

12. The adoption by consensus of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session had offered a unique opportunity to launch a new global consensus on development. Yet implementation of the Declaration had thus far been generally unsatisfactory. A greater effort must be made by both developing and developed countries to meet the commitments set forth in the Declaration.

13. His Government had completed a comprehensive review of the environment and had formulated a draft National Environment Strategy (NES), to guide management of the environment and natural resources and ensure that Fiji's development took place on a sustainable basis. His Government was currently seeking the views of the general public before finalizing the draft strategy. It would shortly sign the United Nations framework Convention on Climate Change. In his delegation's view, the Convention required protocols setting firm targets and timetables for action. It was to be hoped that sufficient countries would ratify the Convention to allow for the speedy implementation of the measures set forth therein. The establishment of a Commission on Sustainable Development offered the best chance of making Agenda 21 an operational reality. Its task should include follow-up of the Conference decisions, overseeing the integration of environment and development in the United Nations system, and examining progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, regional and international levels, including the question of financial resources. Careful consideration must therefore be given to setting up that important commission during the current session.

14. It was increasingly evident that the United Nations was now living up to the expectations placed in it in the political field. It must now also live

(Mr. Finau, Fiji)

up to its role and responsibilities in the economic field. There was much scope for improving its work in that area, and the various proposals at hand should be carefully examined and developed. The Second Committee's relationship with other organs of the United Nations needed to be clearly identified, and overlapping and duplication must, as far as possible, be avoided.

15. Mr. ELIASHIV (Israel) welcomed the agreement reached on the institutional arrangements for the follow-up to the Rio Conference and on a Commission on Sustainable Development. His delegation agreed that there was a need to review the relationship between and the functioning of the various bodies of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields; and it welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General to reform and restructure the United Nations development system.

16. Given the interdependence of various aspects of development, it would be wrong to concentrate on only one particular aspect of development. Israel agreed that there could be no real and long-term solution to the problem of poverty unless environmental concerns were properly integrated into all development activities, and it was concerned over the serious problems of poverty, mass starvation and famine, external debt and environmental degradation.

17. On many occasions Israel had presented to international organizations both within and outside the United Nations system an outline of sustainable development through promotion of the transitional economy. The proposal sought to break the vicious circle of poverty by improving the productivity and quality of life of the poorer peripheral traditional sectors in the societies and economies of the developing countries and to combine the vision of a comprehensive intersectoral development process with pragmatic decentralized planning, programming and implementation while reflecting prevalent constraints. The strategy involved launching programmes with a limited number of projects associated with the most acute socio-economic issues and employing an initial level of complexity that was compatible with the current capacities of development institutions and target institutions. It had applied certain elements of the strategy both within Israel and in its many international cooperation programmes in the developing countries with some success.

18. While Israel believed that technology, particularly environmental technology, was a key element in sustainable development it also believed that such technology must be carefully selected with a view to adapting it to the specific needs of each developing country. As Israel attached great importance to the efforts to combat desertification, it had focused on research and development in the use of solar energy linked to the very extensive development in the use of water resources to produce desalination processes of sea water and brackish water in the desert. It was willing to

(Mr. Eliashiv, Israel)

share with other developing countries those environmental technologies which could play an important role in the global efforts towards achieving sustainable development.

19. As the human factor was also a crucial element to development, increased attention would have to be directed to human resources development, ensuring that men and women participated on an equal footing, and to the transfer of training and technology. Development of human resources had become the key to Israel's technological expansion and a marked feature of its extensive technical and economic cooperation with other countries; it was ready to continue to share its know-how with other developing countries.

20. Countries should set aside their differences and join forces in an effort to find solutions to the problems affecting the whole of mankind. During the recent multilateral talks in the framework of the Middle East peace process, Israel had presented detailed and concrete proposals on projects for regional cooperation and development in such fields as arid zone agricultural development, the recycling of waste, protection of the environment and desalination technology. It was his country's desire that peace should be achieved between all neighbouring countries thus making it possible for all the nations in the area to dedicate their efforts, resources and energies to social and economic development through genuine cooperation in order to build an open regional economy and a common market.

21. Mr. IBRAGIMOV (Kazakhstan) said that the decisions taken at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development were of particular relevance to Kazakhstan, which was facing a particularly acute environmental crisis due to the drying up of the Aral Sea and the need to eliminate the consequences of nuclear-weapon testing in the region around Semipalatinsk. Without broad international assistance, Kazakhstan would not be able to deal with those crises.

22. Kazakhstan was currently engaged in the difficult task of overcoming the consequences of totalitarianism and shifting to a new political and economic system. It was developing broad-based and massive cooperation with foreign countries in a number of areas including industry, science and technology. It had concluded, and was in the process of implementing, treaties with a number of States to encourage and secure mutual protection of investments. It had recently become a fully fledged member of institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It had noted an understanding of its problems on the part of those organizations and of a number of countries, and a sincere desire to assist it in stabilizing its economic situation. Kazakhstan's openness and its great economic potential were a source of attraction to many countries. Bearing in mind those countries' concern to see a firm legal basis with which to guarantee investment protection and accelerate market reforms, the Government had striven to provide the governmental and legal basis for reform, passing legislation governing areas such as property, the basic

(Mr. Ibragimov, Kazakhstan)

principles of foreign activity, foreign investment, economic free trade zones, freedom of economic activity and the development of entrepreneurship, in order to create a sound basis for the free market system.

23. Kazakhstan was ready to cooperate with foreign partners in all spheres of economic activity, and in particular, in modernizing and developing its industry and agriculture. Kazakhstan also needed assistance in implementing its conversion programmes. It gratefully acknowledged the technical, financial and other foreign assistance it had received, but clearly understood that only through a combination of its own people's efforts and international cooperation could it ensure the sustainable and dynamic development of its economy.

24. Measures taken by Kazakhstan to facilitate the transition to a market economy included a firm policy on the key issue of denationalization and privatization of property; intensive establishment of market structures; price liberalization; anti-monopoly policies; new approaches to investment policy; and radical changes in organization of the supply of production materials and technology. It was continuing to reform the organizational structures of its economy, and progress was being made with the difficult process of establishing financing and credit mechanisms. A fundamentally new tax policy had been put together and was being implemented, and specialists in market economy conditions were being trained. New approaches were being sought to economic interaction between members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The President of Kazakhstan had proposed a number of initiatives in that area, which were to be discussed at the meeting of leaders of those States to be held in Bishkek on 9 October 1992.

25. The course of its economic reforms had shown that Kazakhstan was able to cope unaided, but that without broad assistance from the international community, from the international economic organizations and from the highly developed countries, the process would be an unconscionably long one. Kazakhstan was on the road to global economic reforms, and active assistance from those countries would enable it to accelerate the process, both to its own benefit and to that of its foreign partners.

26. Mr. Piriz-Ballón (Uruguay) resumed the Chair.

27. Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that the world was midway through a period characterized by enormous and dynamic change in the political, economic and conceptual spheres. The Committee should be guided in its deliberations by two important points: firstly, that if it failed to grasp the unique opportunity that now presented itself to effect changes that opportunity would be lost forever and, secondly, that in a period of rapid change identical solutions could not be applied twice to the same problems.

28. In his delegation's view, Member States had a unique opportunity at the current session to design a capable United Nations. However, to do so, at

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

least four things were needed: the work of the General Assembly and the work and functions of the Economic and Social Council must be rationalized to improve coherence and authority; the Council itself must be revitalized; the Commission on Sustainable Development must be successfully launched in order to ensure that it was fully incorporated within the work of the Organization designed to produce the capable United Nations mentioned by the Secretary-General; and, the governance and abilities of operational agencies that delivered practical projects to people around the world must be improved.

29. There had been a profound shift in thinking about the nature of global economic relations as evidenced by the adoption of the concept of sustainable development. There had been an equally profound change in the professed policy and attitude of the major United Nations-related financial institutions. The executive heads of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had expressed a willingness to commit their institutions to a new degree and kind of global economic cooperation that had not previously been heard before. Those signs would appear to indicate that if the Second Committee had the courage to make great change it might be met equally by others in a position to help it effect such change and make it work.

30. His delegation would consider favourably any proposals that would help to meet the new challenges, but such proposals would be judged from the standpoint of their ability to make a practical contribution to the delivery of assistance that the United Nations system could render to Member States and to the contribution that such proposals could make to the overall ability to meet the challenge of great change. The time for talk was over; it was now time for action. The decisions that would be taken at the current session would affect the economic and social welfare of very many human beings and would have the possibility of ensuring a balance throughout the whole United Nations system. The Committee had a unique opportunity to design a new system for the economic and social work of the United Nations and to produce the capable United Nations of which the Secretary-General had spoken.

31. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to proceed to an exchange of views with representatives of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as suggested by the representative of Pakistan speaking on behalf of the Group of 77. Questions should refer not to individual countries but rather to issues of shared concern for all members of the Committee.

32. Mr. BARNETT (United Kingdom) welcomed the emphasis being given by the World Bank to poverty alleviation and inquired what steps were being taken to ensure that the philosophy permeated the Bank at all levels particularly down to the level of country desks. He also inquired when the World Bank would actually issue its internal directive on the question of structural adjustment, including the important issue of the need to safeguard the poorest segments of society.

33. Mr. HADDAD (World Bank) replied that the directive would be issued within a matter of weeks. The strategy for poverty alleviation called for two major things, namely, economic growth whereby the poor sectors could have a larger share of the fruits of development and targetted interventions designed to provide more opportunities for labour and to enhance opportunities for the poor to participate in the labour market. As a result, an operational strategy had been developed. More recently a handbook for staff had been prepared in collaboration with all the bodies and agencies of the United Nations and bilateral donors. On the basis of the handbook, technical guidelines had been issued to staff. Currently, every single operation or scheme in any country had to be related to the theme of poverty alleviation.

34. Structural adjustment was also closely related to poverty alleviation because it was clear that in some cases if structural adjustment was not well monitored and designed it could, in the short term, have an adverse impact on some sectors of the population. The Bank had therefore devised lending mechanisms called social action programmes which would go hand in hand with structural adjustment programmes so that groups which were adversely affected by some of the adjustment measures would be covered under human resources development programmes or some of the other measures.

35. Mrs. FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL (Austria) asked what the thinking of the Fund and Bank was on the modalities for the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

36. Mr. HADDAD (World Bank) said that internal consultations were currently being held on the subject. However, the Bank hoped to participate in the working group set up by the Committee and hoped that the group could provide technical leadership and that its support system would not be so rigid as to jeopardize the activities of others working in the area but rather would facilitate their work and be a very good forum for collaboration.

37. Mr. CHIARADIA (Argentina) said he wished to know the status of the consultations between the Secretary-General and the multilateral financing institutions, called for in General Assembly resolution 46/205, concerning the convening of an international conference on the financing of development, and whether a report would be issued on the subject.

38. Mr. HADDAD (World Bank) replied that the Bank believed that the convening of an international conference on the financing of development must be decided by the General Assembly rather than the Bank. While the Bank was ready to participate in technical discussions on the convening of the conference, it had a number of reservations about the advisability of establishing another forum for mobilizing resources for development. Specifically, it was concerned that, if the conference became a forum for the mobilization of resources, many donors might freeze their commitments pending the outcome of the negotiations regarding preparations for the conference. That could affect the implementation of Agenda 21 and the financial aspect of the resolutions and decisons of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

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as well as the tenth replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA). There had been a productive discussion on financing at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Perhaps the issue of financing could be taken up at one of the upcoming conferences.

39. Mr. BHATIA (International Monetary Fund) said that a number of discussions had been held between the Secretariat and the World Bank and IMF. The Fund had not taken any position on the convening of the international conference, and it would cooperate fully with whatever decision was taken by the General Assembly. With respect to the technical issues of the conference, the Fund considered that, in view of the fact that substantial international mechanisms already existed for managing and channelling flows of resources from developed to developing countries, it was important to decide whether additional mechanisms were required, and whether or not they would be in competition with existing mechanisms.

40. The Fund took a much more holistic approach to development and it believed that more attention should be given to the social aspect of development. Current efforts in that area were scattered, and the response to social problems was usually belated, inadequate and uncoordinated. It was for the General Assembly to decide whether that aspect of development should be considered in the context of an international conference on the financing of development, or whether it should be taken up at a social summit or in the context of current efforts to reorganize the United Nations system.

41. Mr. SETH (India) noted that both the World Bank and IMF seemed to be reticent about the convening of an international conference on the financing of development. The former appeared to believe that the conference concerned the mobilization of resources for the Bank's activities, and IMF, too, seemed to view the conference from its own limited perspective.

42. He wished to know whether the World Bank and IMF considered that the conference could deal with the issues of macroeconomic surveillance and coordination and the impact of currency fluctuations. The concerns of the developing countries in that area seemed to have been completely disregarded. He would also welcome comments upon the impact, if any, of currency instabilities on capital flows to developing countries.

43. Mr. HAMBURGER (Netherlands) said that his delegation had expressed its disappointment at the decision of the Development Committee with respect to follow-up to the Rio Conference, in particular regarding the idea of an "earth increment" to IDA. He requested the World Bank and IMF to comment on the outcome of that meeting, particularly in view of the fact that the Trade and Development Report, 1992 focused on sustainable development as the core issue of development.

44. Mr. GUERRERO (Philippines) asked whether the Bretton Woods institutions had any ideas or blueprints for debt relief, either partial or total, for developing countries. The World Bank and IMF should express their views on the establishment, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, of an international commission on debt and development, which would include such organizations as the World Bank and IMF.

45. Mr. PONIKIEWSKI (Poland) wished to know how long the additionality of resources for economies in transition could be maintained, and what new sources of financing might be found for projects in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, particularly in the light of the tenth replenishment of IDA.

46. Mr. NKOUNKOU (Congo) inquired about the position of IMF regarding the proposal made at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council on the social element of structural adjustment programmes. He also requested the World Bank and the Fund to express their views on complete or partial debt relief for the middle-income African countries.

47. Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan) said that the Group of 77 had asked the World Bank and IMF, as well as a representative of the Group of Seven, to provide information about the effect of the recent monetary crisis on the developing countries. In their comments, the World Bank and IMF should bear in mind that there was currently no macroeconomic coordination at the international level. The developing countries had long been in favour of such coordination, which perhaps might also be undertaken by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

48. No decision had yet been taken on the allocation of available resources. She wondered whether it would not be possible to mobilize resources for the developing countries in the same way as had been done for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

49. The World Bank and IMF should elaborate on how best they could cooperate with the United Nations, especially in the context of the restructuring of the Organization.

50. Mr. JALLOW (the Gambia) asked whether the World Bank and IMF had devised any programme or economic package for developing countries that had graduated from IMF/World Bank economic recovery or structural adjustment programmes.

51. Mr. KAARIA (Finland) asked the representative of the World Bank to give a brief description of the division of labour in programme and project execution and implementation between the World Bank and the recipient country concerned and to indicate whether or not the Bank had found a lack of capacity in national execution.

52. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that some countries that had signed agreements on structural adjustment programmes with the World Bank had experienced a rise in

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unemployment because of a scarcity of jobs. The Bank should comment on the specific measures it had taken, or intended to take, to alleviate the situation of people in developing countries who had received a higher education but were unable to find employment.

53. Mr. ARELLANO (Mexico) wished to know whether the Bretton Woods institutions were considering changes in their current structures and modus operandi in response to the sweeping changes that had recently taken place in the world.

54. Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco) said that his delegation had emphasized the need for IMF to monitor the macroeconomic policies of the most industrialized countries. He wished to know what means IMF had of exercising pressure on the most industrialized countries, given that they were the main stockholders in the Fund and therefore governed its resources.

55. Ms. DIOP (Senegal) said that, as coordinator of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Department of Economic and Social Development was currently holding consultations with agencies both within and outside the United Nations system with a view to mobilizing resources for the New Agenda. In that connection, she wished to know what action the World Bank and IMF were taking to implement the New Agenda.

56. Mr. SENE (Senegal) said that he wished to know how the World Bank and IMF viewed better coordination between United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, and whether the World Bank and the Fund had made their contribution to the revitalization of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.

57. Mrs. HASSAN (Egypt) noted the scepticism expressed by the representative of the World Bank about the objectives of the international conference on the financing of development. His suggestion that resources should be mobilized for individual topics, such as women, population and social development, was completely contrary to the current international trend towards an integrated approach to development. She emphasized that the World Bank and IMF should take account of the views and concerns of the developing countries.

58. Mr. OULD HABOTT (Mauritania) asked the representatives of both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund what measures their institutions had envisaged to create jobs for the young unemployed.

59. Mr. HADDAD (World Bank) said, regarding mobilization of resources, that there was no dispute that resources should be increased. Technical discussions were under way in the World Bank to consider mechanisms whereby that could be achieved. The best solution might be a conference on financing for the transfer of resources for development. What had been done for Eastern Europe might be attempted for the developing countries. World Bank resources devoted to Eastern Europe accounted for only 10 per cent of total activities.

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There were no problems with additionality. Loans to Eastern Europe and Central Asia would not deprive resource flows from any other region. The money for such loans came from the capital market, from a World Bank capital stock of $150 billion, to which a further $67 billion could be added. That was ample for the countries in economic transition of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

60. Regarding the International Development Association (IDA), resources were limited. Negotiations were still under way for the tenth replenishment of IDA; it should be possible to agree on a figure for the tenth replenishment to be equivalent to that of the ninth replenishment. Some seven or eight more countries now qualified for IDA than previously. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had agreed that the Earth Increment should be financed from IDA, in which case individual country shares would be less.

61. Turning to debt, the World Bank was in favour of debt forgiveness, except of course as far as the World Bank itself was concerned. Forgiveness of multilateral debt was a complicated issue. With respect to official debt, many initiatives had been taken. The World Bank had provided technical assistance to both sides in many cases, but was not part of the negotiations; its role was to provide financial support to countries participating in debt relief programmes to buy back their debt. It provided various debt reduction facilities and helped countries to sell equity for debt forgiveness.

62. World Bank loans for structural adjustment accounted for only 15 per cent of its total portfolio, a proportion equivalent to its loans for the social sector. Countries which graduated from structural adjustment programmes reverted to investment programmes, which accounted for 85 per cent of World Bank activities. A move was under way towards country-based operations, with different packages tailored to the needs of each individual country. Job creation had been discussed in the World Bank's research section, where they had drawn on the experience of various countries. A recent study undertaken by the World Bank dealing with pre-job training and continuous programmes of apprenticeship could be made available.

63. Commenting on the institutional set-up in the World Bank, he said that once loans had been granted from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or credit provided from IDA those funds became the country's money. The World Bank was not responsible for the implementation of projects, it merely financed them; its mandate was to supervise disbursement on the basis of agreements. Regarding changes in the World Bank designed to cope with global changes, he said that the World Bank was constantly changing and that all countries were strongly represented, which kept the World Bank attuned to changes in the world at large. The World Bank had recently upgraded its office at the United Nations.

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64. Concerning the New Agenda for Africa, the World Bank had a regional unit for Africa, to which it gave the highest priority; some 50 per cent of IDA resources went to Africa. The World Bank strongly supported the New Agenda.

65. Finally, the World Bank welcomed all requests for collaboration with the United Nations. There was now much closer collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other specialized agencies, and the World Bank would welcome increased collaboration with intergovernmental bodies such as the Economic and Social Council. Coordination targeted at global programmes worked well, and coordination at the country level was most desirable, especially when country strategies were well designed and planned. Coordination did not need to include everyone at the same time.

66. Mr. BHATIA (International Monetary Fund) said that the recent currency crisis had been a consequence of maladjustments in the industrial world. Too much emphasis had been placed on monetary policy and there had been incomplete implementation of medium-term strategies to control inflation. Those factors, coupled with the uncertainties over the Maastricht Treaty, notably the referendum in France, had triggered the crisis. The 1987 crisis had resulted from a lack of confidence. However, its impact had been more on stock markets, whereas the current crisis had affected currency markets, especially those within the European Exchange Rate Mechanism; it was not a world-wide crisis. There had been a lack of confidence in individual country policies. Some stability had now been re-established. The main problem was to develop a mechanism to maintain and strengthen confidence and increase the surveillance authority of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Interim Committee would discuss surveillance mechanisms.

67. The perspective on debt had changed considerably since the mid-1980s, and the crisis appeared to have been managed and subsequently tamed. The question was how to go beyond the problem of debt. The debt-service burden of developing countries had been reduced by 50 per cent and total debt had fallen by a similar proportion. Some 90 per cent of commercial debt was now covered by agreements with commercial banks. Although there were problems for Africa and other low- and middle-income countries which were highly indebted, some progress had been made and it should be possible to get more preferential treatment for those countries.

68. Regarding resource flows and development finance, amounts had been increasing, but major increases were not to be expected. It had been proposed that the target for official development assistance should be increased from 0.7 per cent to a full 1 per cent of GNP. He felt it was important to achieve the original target before increasing it.

69. Finally, with regard to Fund programmes, several countries in Latin America and even in Africa had graduated from such programmes and re-established their creditworthiness, achieving positive and sustainable growth rates. Fund programmes now had many social aspects and there were good

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inter-agency contacts. IMF had learned much from various countries and endeavoured to convey their concerns to management.

70. The CHAIRMAN informed delegates that he had prepared a summary of the salient points of the general debate, which would be circulated in due course.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.